

Northern Great Plains Network

Inventory and Monitoring Monthly Report

April 2002

Photographic Equipment/Supplies and Kodak Grant: Thanks to Marianne Mills (Badlands Chief of Education) the Northern Great Plains Network now owns a top-of-the-line document scanner, a slide scanner, three digital cameras with large capacity memory cards, and several dozen rolls of slide film. The equipment is all compliments of a grant from Kodak and the National Park Foundations. Marianne deserves thanks for bringing the grant to my attention and for doing most of the legwork. I hope to someday have a library of digital images of species in the parks that can be linked to NPSpecies records.

Mammal Inventory: All parks having mammal inventory work this summer should have received an email from Dr. Cheryl Schmidt by now with a tentative schedule. Her schedule is:

June 10 – June 21	Agate Fossil Beds NM
June 21 – July 1	Ft. Laramie NHS
July 15 – July 26	Devils Tower NM
July 27 – August 5	Mt. Rushmore NMEM
August 13 – August 18	Wind Cave NP
August 20 – August 29	Scotts Bluff NM
Sept. 3 – Sept. 13	Jewel Cave NM

(Reminder – MNRR, FOUS, and KNRI are scheduled for next summer.) I encourage parks to reply to her email and let her know of any special considerations, issues, etc.. I know that some of you have already coordinated with her directly and I appreciate that. Please note that Dr. Schmidt is conducting this work through an inter-agency agreement with the U.S. Forest Service.

Herp Inventory: Dr. Brian Smith will be starting with the southernmost parks (i.e., Scotts Bluff and Ft. Laramie) and working his way northward over the course of the summer. The schedule he provided me is:

May 13-17: FOLA and SCBL.
May 20-24: DETO, JECA, and MORU.
May 27-31: FOUS and KNRI.
June 3-7: FOLA and SCBL.
June 10-14: DETO, JECA, and MORU.
June 17-21: FOUS and KNRI.
June 24-28: FOLA and SCBL.

For those parks some distance from Spearfish, South Dakota (FOLA, SCBL, FOUS, KNRI) he will likely arrive on a Sunday night and leave on a Friday night. Those parks in the Black Hills may also be visited on weekends (assuming that's all right with the

parks). Some park visits may be last minute decisions since herp work is greatly influenced by the weather (i.e., it's most effective immediately after a rain). Brian may also try and visit some parks this September/October as part of his teaching a herpetology course at Black Hills State University (that may require some overnite camping at those parks that have facilities). I don't yet have info on his work at MNRR; last I heard he was looking to subcontract with someone affiliated with the University of Nebraska-Omaha (I'll try and get the info to the park).

Bird Inventory: The bird inventories will be starting in the Black Hills in late May. The following schedule is tentative.

WICA:	May 23-28
JECA:	May 23-28
MORU:	May 27-31
DETO:	June 3-7
KNRI & FOUS:	June 10-15
FOLA:	June 16-17

The birders will likely be at a park for only a couple of days. The Principle Investigator for the inventories is Arvind Panjabi.

Biological Technician: Unfortunately, Dawn Holguin has decided to resign as the I&M Program data technician. Dawn was unable to find affordable housing in the Badlands NP area and suitable day care for her young boy. I wish her the best of luck in the future. Dawn did make some progress in populating the NPSpecies database, but much, much more work remains to be done. I am exploring options to hire someone for the summer using existing certs that Badlands has, but I am holding off on advertising for a long-term hire until I re-evaluate where and how the program can be most effective between now and when we re-locate to the U.S. Forest Service building south of Rapid City.

Vouchers: The Voucher Committee had a conference call a few weeks back to discuss vouchers. It was determined that I should draft a letter and, following review by the committee, send it out to several museums to solicit bids on preparing and storing our vouchers. I have checked with Gary Willson (Great Plains CESU) to see if soliciting these "bids" is appropriate and he said it was. I hope to get a draft of the letter to the committee within the next few days.

Compliance: A couple weeks back I sent out an email to all parks having inventories informing them of the need to complete the necessary compliance. In most (and perhaps all) cases a categorical exclusion should suffice for NEPA compliance. Call me if you have comments regarding compliance (or Sue Jennings in Omaha).

Permits: As you should know, I have completed the online Park Research and Collection permit applications for Dr. Brian Smith and Dr. Cheryl Schmidt. If your park is getting an inventory please process these permits as soon as possible. I have also submitted application for state permits for all states except North Dakota (I anticipate doing that one

soon). These latter permits will be under my name with Dr. Smith and Dr. Schmidt being sub-permittees.

Study Plan: Each park should have recently received a hard copy of the final Northern Great Plains Inventory Study Plan. Included with the plan was a signature page which I need the park Superintendent to sign and return to me. I have received signed pages from about half the parks. If you haven't yet signed and returned the page please do so. Thank you.